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Reagan Calls Missile Plan 'Propaganda'

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OKLAHOMA CITY—President Reagan on Tuesday dismissed the Soviet nuclear arms freeze as a propaganda ploy and said that the United States, while continuing to negotiate, will proceed with plans to deploy missiles next year in Europe.

Reagan had been tipped off through intelligence sources that Soviet President Leonid I. Brezhnev planned to make a major statement Tuesday on nuclear weapons in Europe, an Administration official said. So Reagan decided to speak out against the concept of a freeze—as advanced last week by more than 140 members of Congress—in a speech Monday to the Tennessee Legislature.

Reagan handled his response to Brezhnev's speech on Tuesday in two ways: rejecting it in relatively soft language during an address to the Oklahoma Legislature and denouncing it in harsher tones through a separate statement released under the name of Larry Speakes, his deputy press secretary.

The President, here to push his budget and new federalism proposals, told the Oklahoma lawmakers that "if President Brezhnev is serious about real arms control—and I hope he is—he will join in real arms reduction."

Freeze 'Isn't Good Enough'

"A freeze simply isn't good enough because it doesn't go far enough. We must go beyond a freeze," Reagan said, borrowing from the same language he used Monday to condemn the congressional freeze proposal.

The statement issued through Reagan's press spokesman was much stronger. It called Brezhnev's move a "propaganda gesture" and said the action was "neither evidence of Soviet restraint nor is it designed to foster an arms control agreement." "Like previous such Soviet freeze proposals," the President's aide said, "this one seeks to legitimize Soviet superiority, to leave the Soviet Union free to con-

U.S. Dismisses Soviet A-Freeze

tinue its buildup, to divide the NATO alliance, to stop U.S. deployments and thus to secure for the Soviet Union unchallenged hegemony over Europe."

Brezhnev announced a unilateral Soviet moratorium on deploying medium-range SS-20 mobile nuclear missiles in the European part of the Soviet Union and said the Soviets this year intend to reduce overall numbers of medium-range missiles "unless there is a new aggravation of the international situation."

But Brezhnev also warned that if the United States proceeds with its placement of 572 medium-range Pershing 2 and cruise missiles in Europe, the Soviets will take retaliatory steps to put the United States and its allies "in an analogous position."

Reagan made it clear that the United States will proceed with its planned deployment, scheduled to begin late next year, while continuing to negotiate with the Soviets over reducing medium-range missiles in Europe.

"We regret the Soviet Union apparently prefers propaganda gestures to concentrating on serious negotiations . . ." the presidential spokesman said. "For its part, the United States, with the full support of its allies, will continue to implement both tracks . . . the deployment of new systems in Europe and the pursuit of genuine arms control, which we hope will make those deployments unnecessary."

'Fairly Transparent Ploy'

In Washington, a senior Administration official said there is little new and nothing equitable in the Brezhnev moratorium proposal.

"It was clearly designed to achieve a political effect," the official said. "It is a fairly transparent ploy aimed at dividing the Atlantic Alliance. We are confident it will fail."

The official, who briefed reporters on the condition that his name not be used, expressed concern at Brezhnev's implied threat to take "retaliatory steps" to bring the United States within range of intermediate-range missiles if the North Atlantic Treaty Organization goes forward with the deployment of its new missiles in Western Europe to counterbalance the 300 Soviet SS-20 missiles now in place in the western Soviet Union.

Asked whether that warning was being interpreted in the Administration as a threat to put intermediate-range Soviet missiles in Cuba, the official replied: "We don't know what Brezhnev had in mind. If you draw the

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